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Commissioners

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

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CONSUMER ASSISTANCE DIVISION BULLETIN 93-1

TO: All Utilities

FROM: Barbara R. Alexander, Director, Consumer Assistance Division

RE: Disconnection of Single-Meter, Multi-Unit Dwellings

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The Maine Water Utilities Association asked the Consumer Assistance Division to interpret Chapter 810, Section 9(I), Disconnection Notice Procedures for Leased or Rented Property. Chapter 810, Section 9(I) requires a utility to have an approved Term and Condition before it disconnects a single-meter, multi-unit dwelling.

The Term and Condition must include two provisions:

- 1) It must assess a collection fee which the utility will charge the landlord to collect the unpaid account balance. This fee is in addition to any other approved reconnection fees;
- 2) It must authorize the utility to separately meter each dwelling unit, at the landlord's expense, if the dwelling is disconnected for nonpayment. The Term and Condition does not require the utility to separately meter each unit if the dwelling is disconnected for nonpayment. Rather, it allows the utility to determine if the dwelling should be individually metered, based on the individual circumstances and feasibility of separately metering each unit.

We want to remind utilities that Section 9(I)(d) requires utilities to notify the Consumer Assistance Division "... of the actions taken pursuant to this subsection and their results." You can notify us with a letter which describes the utility's efforts to avoid disconnecting the service, including describing the pending disconnection notice given to the tenants, summaries of contacts or letters to tenants, and the results of attempts to avoid disconnecting the service.

This is an informal staff interpretation. You have the right to ask for a more formal Advisory Ruling from the Commission under Chapter 110 of the Commission's rules.

BA/kp